

STAFF SENATE
THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT TYLER
Policies and Procedures

1.0 Who We Are

The Staff Senate is an advisory body of The University of Texas at Tyler through which staff members may make recommendations to the President relative to interests, concerns, and issues affecting the life and future of the University. Staff Senate may advise the President regarding issues and concerns that are of particular interest to members of the UT Tyler full-time, non-faculty staff. Staff Senate may make recommendations on general grievance policies but does not act on individual grievance issues. Staff Senate may also advise on other specific issues and otherwise act at the request of the President. Staff Senate shall make every effort to keep staff members informed and, in turn, keep the President and university administrators informed and advised of the needs and interests of the staff on issues and activities affecting them. The primary goal of Staff Senate is to support the mission and vision of The University of Texas at Tyler.

2.0 Definitions

- “Staff” is defined as The University of Texas at Tyler’s combined full-time, academic-related, non-faculty employees.
- “UT Tyler” is defined as The University of Texas at Tyler’s main and satellite campuses, and The University of Texas at Tyler Health Science Center, which is also referred to as HSC.
- The University of Texas System is referred to as UT System.
- “Administrative & Professional” or “A&P” are defined as specific employee classifications, as defined through the main campus’s employment procedures within the Human Resources office.
- “Administrative,” “Executive,” and “Professional” are defined as specific employee classifications, as defined through the HSC employment procedures within the Human Resources office.
- Districts are, in general, areas established by the designated Staff Senate subcommittee that follow the general UT Tyler organizational structure by reporting area. The districts are designed so there will be at least two Senators for every 25-75 staff members. The districts are reviewed every two years by the designated Staff Senate subcommittee, with final vote of approval by majority of the Senators.

3.0 Purpose and Goals

- Inform and advise the President on university issues from the staff perspective
- Develop ideas for improving UT Tyler services
- Promote a positive, caring atmosphere throughout the workplace
- Strive to foster pride in the University and unity of purpose
- Further the professional development of staff members
- Suggest ways to reward outstanding performers among the staff
- Direct Staff Development as appropriate
- Direct University Appreciation each year
- Inform, advise, and otherwise act on specific issues at the request of the President

4.0 Membership and Composition

4.1 Membership

The membership of the Staff Senate shall consist of elected (voting) members and ex-officio (non-voting) members.

- 4.1.1 Voting staff members, referred to as Senators, shall be elected from among the full-time, non-faculty staff, not classified as Administrative & Professional, Administrative, Executive, or

Professional. In addition, staff that report directly to the President are ineligible to serve. Eligible staff must have a minimum of one year of continuous employment at UT Tyler at the start of the term of office in September. During an elected term, a representative loses Staff Senate membership upon leaving the employment of UT Tyler or movement to a non-eligible position.

- 4.1.2 Non-voting ex-officio members shall be the current Staff Senate President, the Staff Senate Past President, a member from the Office of Human Resources, the UT System Employee Advisory Council (EAC) Senators (if not already a voting member), and any persons named at the discretion of the Staff Senate Executive Committee.

Staff Senate representation consists of two Senators from each district and shall be proportional based on the number of employees from designated voting districts as determined by the Staff Senate.

4.2 Districts

District 1

Academic Affairs, Academic Operations, Academic Success, Administration, Center of Education Technology, Center for Excellence in Teaching & Learning, Clinical Research Office, Continuous Improvement & Accreditation, Office of Contract Administration, English Language Institute, Longview University Center, Office of Digital Learning, Office of Institutional Advancement, President's Office, Smith County Jail Services, Undergraduate & Online Education, UT Tyler Online, University Advancement

District 2

Career Success, Residence Life, Student Engagement, Student Services, Student Success, Title IX

District 3

Accountability & Information, Accounting, Accounting & Financial Reporting, Business Affairs, Budget & Financial Planning, Budget & Finance, Department of Planning, Financial Services, Human Resources, Information Analysis, Information Security, Information Technology, Internal Audit, IT Security, Legal Affairs, NE TX Initiative, Procurement Services, Purchasing, Student Business Services, Technology Support

District 4

Admissions, Enrollment Management, Enrollment Services, Financial Aid, Office of the Registrar, Community Engagement/Special Events, Copy Center, Cowan Fine Arts Center, Marketing & Communications, Media Productions

District 5

Athletics, Patriots Center, Graduate Admissions, Graduate School, HRPP, Office of Sponsored Programs, Honors Program, Office of International Programs, Office of Research Compliance, Research Compliance, Library, Medical Library

District 6

Building Maintenance, Capital Planning & Construction, Custodial Services, Environmental Health & Safety, Ground Maintenance, Materials Management, Physical Plant, Plant Operations, Support Services, Utilities, Access Services & Security System, Emergency Management & Safety, Fleet Management, Police, University Police

District 7

College of Arts & Sciences, College of Education & Psychology

District 8

Fisch College of Pharmacy, School of Nursing

District 9

College of Engineering, Soules College of Business

District 10

School of Health Professions, School of Medicine

Districts will be reviewed every odd-numbered year, at least, after the Staff Senate is established to consider reallocation of the member seats.

4.3 Method of Election

In July of each year, the Staff Senate shall solicit nominations from applicable districts and conduct the election of Senators.

4.3.1 Process

Annual elections shall be directed by the Staff Senate's Nominations and Elections Committee and all staff members shall be eligible to vote for their district's representation.

The Nominations and Elections Committee shall begin the process for the election of new Senators by the first Wednesday in June by sending a list of eligible staff members from which candidates will be nominated. The email shall identify the service area and instructions for how to nominate a Senator.

Each staff member within a District may nominate eligible staff members from the same service area to serve the District.

The closing date for nominations shall be the third Wednesday in June. The Nominations and Elections committee shall review the nominations.

The Nominations and Elections Committee shall notify the nominees that their names will be placed on the election ballots unless they withdraw by the fourth Wednesday in June. The Executive Committee will assign a staff member as an at-large Senator, if there are insufficient nominations for a District.

The Nominations and Elections Committee shall prepare, distribute, and collect the election ballots.

On the first Wednesday in July, the Nominations and Elections Committee shall distribute the electronic voting ballots to each District; nominees shall appear on the ballot in alphabetical order. Each employee will then vote on one representative from their District.

Voting shall conclude on or before the second Wednesday in July.

Ballots shall be collected and reviewed by the Nominations and Elections Committee. The candidate receiving the highest number of votes will be declared the winner and will serve as the Senator for their appointed District. Runoff elections shall be scheduled to decide tie votes.

The third week of July the Nominations and Elections Committee will send communication to the District(s) in which elections were held with the election results. The Nominations and Elections Committee will notify all newly elected representatives. The Nominations and Elections Committee will notify all members of the Staff Senate, the President, and any Advisory members of Staff Senate of the results of the election.

4.4 Terms of Office

- 4.4.1 All Senators shall serve two-year terms. Each year of service shall begin on September 1 following the election. Newly elected Senators should plan to attend the August Staff Senate meeting prior to their term starting on September 1.

The term will be linked to even and odd years so that half of the Staff Senate will be reelected each year. No Senator shall be eligible to serve more than three consecutive terms. A Senator is eligible to serve again after a break in service following three consecutive terms.

If a member of Staff Senate changes jobs to another area, that member may tender their resignation or continue to serve on the Staff Senate for the completion of the term as an at-large member.

4.4.2 Occurrence of Vacancy

Upon 30 days of known vacancy of a representative that occurs through termination of employment, resignation from Staff Senate or expulsion from Staff Senate, the Nominations and Elections Committee shall then hold a special election to fill the vacant position to serve the remainder of the current term.

An employee who serves out an unexpired term vacated by the elected Senator is eligible to be elected to serve on Staff Senate for three (3) more consecutive terms.

- 4.4.3 Should a District not be able to fill the Senator positions, at-large Senators may be selected from the campus community. An eligible staff member, as described in Section 4.1.1, may be eligible to serve in an at-large position. At-large members will be suggested by the Nominations and Elections Committee and must receive approval by the district that they will represent.

4.4.4 Removal from Office

Any elected Senator can be removed from office for poor or non-performance of Staff Senate duties. A petition requesting such removal can be brought to Staff Senate by a simple majority of the members of the service area or such removal may be initiated by action of Staff Senate. Decisions of Staff Senate are final. Removal will be effective upon the vote of a simple majority of those present and voting at a meeting of Staff Senate at which a quorum is present. Possible causes of removal include, but not be limited to: non-attendance (after two consecutive, unexcused absences, the President shall notify the Senator regarding a possible removal from Staff Senate); failure to consistently report on activities of Staff Senate to the service area; unavailability of the representative to constituents.

5.0 Duties and Responsibilities of Senators

Representatives shall attend all closed meetings of Staff Senate. Notify a member of the Staff Senate Executive Committee of any absences.

Representatives shall serve on committees of Staff Senate and may be elected as a Chair of those committees.

Representatives shall be available to their constituents, indicating how they can be contacted. They are to be willing to hear concerns, to receive information and suggestions, and to communicate these effectively to Staff Senate. In turn, Senators must keep their constituents informed of the work of Staff Senate and matters that the administration communicates to Staff Senate.

Representatives shall notify supervisor of elected position and responsibilities.

6.0 Officers and Elections

6.1 Titles of Officers

The officers of Staff Senate shall be President, Vice President, Historian, Secretary, Treasurer, Past President and UT System Employee Advisory Council (EAC) Representatives.

6.2 Method of Election

6.2.1 Each year in May, Staff Senate shall elect the incoming President, and UT System EAC Representative and Alternate, as appropriate. Each year in September, Staff Senate shall elect the rest of the officers: Vice President, Historian, Secretary, and Treasurer.

6.2.2 During the election period, the current Staff Senate president shall send a call for nominations for the appropriate officer positions to all council members. Members shall have seven (7) days in which to send their nominations for an office: May shall include President and UT System EAC Representative or Alternate; August shall include Vice President, Historian, Secretary, and Treasurer.

Once the nomination process has closed, each nominee will be contacted for permission to have their name placed on the ballot. Nominees shall have seven (7) days to accept or decline the nomination. Permission granted / acceptance is indicative of a willingness to serve as the officer if elected.

Staff Senate President shall distribute the electronic voting ballots to each Senator; nominees shall appear on the ballot in alphabetical order. Each Senator will vote for one nominee and ballots shall be collected and reviewed by the President. The candidate receiving the highest number of votes will be declared the winner and will serve as the officer.

6.2.3 If no candidate receives a simple majority of votes in the first round of balloting, a run-off election is held among the smallest number of candidates who cumulatively received a simple majority of votes. Balloting will continue in this manner until one candidate receives a simple majority of the votes cast by those representatives present and voting.

6.3 Terms of Office

The terms of office for the Staff Senate officers shall be one year, with the exception of the UT System EAC Senators, which serve three-year terms. The in-coming officers assume their offices on September 1 following election.

6.3.1 Change of Voting Service Area

In the interest of continuity in Staff Senate work, if an officer changes voting Districts, they will carry out their term and are expected to serve in an at-large capacity if their new District is fully

represented on the council.

6.3.2 Occurrence of Vacancy

In case of an officer vacancy, the Staff Senate shall fill such vacancy for the unexpired term.

6.3.3 Transfer of Records

All materials pertaining to current Council business shall be transferred from outgoing officers to incoming officers. The Executive Committee shall ensure that past records of STAFF SENATE are maintained according to the UT System Records Retention Policy.

6.4 Duties of Officers

6.4.1 President

The duties of the President shall be:

- To preside at all meetings
- To prepare the formal agenda for each meeting
- To serve as the budgetary authority of all accounts related to the Staff Senate
- To carry out the responsibilities as outlined in the Handbook of Operating Procedures regarding appropriate University committees or panels
- To represent the Staff Senate on the appropriate University committees or panels
- To chair the Executive Committee
- To serve as the staff voice in all arenas

6.4.2 Vice President

The duties of the Vice President shall be:

- To fulfill the duties of the Staff Senate President in the absence of the President
- To assist the Staff Senate President in performing leadership responsibilities
- To appoint and maintain membership rosters for standing and ad-hoc committees in consultation with Executive Committee, as needed
- To maintain committee membership rosters and fill any vacancies
- To chair the Benefits Committee
- To carry out duties as delegated by the Staff Senate President

6.4.3 Historian

The duties of the Historian shall be:

- To keep accurate records of the history of the staff by cataloging issues, past and present
- To compile and maintain the roster of Senators and dates of service
- To chair the Nominations & Elections Committee
- To carry out duties as delegated by the Staff Senate President

6.4.4 Secretary

The duties of the Secretary shall be:

- To record and maintain the minutes of the Staff Senate
- To record present and absent Senators and ex-officio members at every meeting
- To present copies of the closed meeting agendas and minutes to the members of the Staff Senate
 - Agenda shall be distributed at least one (1) working day prior to the monthly meeting
 - Minutes shall be distributed at least ten (10) working days prior to the next scheduled meeting monthly meeting to be voted on

- To present copies of the open meeting agendas and minutes to the University community
 - Agenda shall be distributed at least two (2) working days prior to the monthly meeting
 - Minutes shall be shared on the Staff Senate webpage before the next monthly meeting
- Serve as Secretary to the Executive Committee
- Record and maintain minutes of the Executive Committee
- To maintain and update the Staff Senate webpage
- To chair the Communications Committee
- To carry out duties as delegated by the Staff Senate President

6.4.5 Treasurer

The duties of the Treasurer shall be:

- To assist the Staff Senate President in the management of the Staff Senate account
- To file a written report at the end of the fiscal year summarizing the income and expenditures of the Staff Senate for that academic year
- To chair the UT Tyler Star Award Committee
- To carry out duties as delegated by the Staff Senate President

6.4.6 Past President

The duties of the Past President shall be:

- To fulfill the duties of the Staff Senate President in the absence of the President and Vice President
- To consult with the Staff Senate President and provide guidance as requested
- To carry out duties as delegated by the Staff Senate President

6.4.7 UT System Employee Advisory Council Representative and Alternate

The University of Texas System Employee Advisory Council (EAC) is a selected representative advisory group that works with, and on behalf of, The University of Texas System. Each year the EAC meets with the Board of Regents to present information and make recommendations regarding issues of importance to the employees of UT System.

The University of Texas at Tyler combined enterprise, both academic and healthcare, elect a total of two (2) Representatives and one (1) Alternate to serve on the council. The Representatives are elected from each enterprise; one (1) Representative from the academic staff-base and one (1) Representative from the healthcare staff-base. The Alternate shall alternate enterprise staff-base's each term, to ensure equitable representation each term. The UT System EAC Representatives and Alternates do not report to the Staff Senate but are integral to the success of the staff at UT Tyler and the Staff Senate facilitates election of the positions.

6.4.7.1 The duties of the UT System Representative shall be:

- To attend all UT System EAC meetings
- To facilitate bilateral communication between UT System EAC and UT Tyler staff
- To update and inform the Staff Senate of UT System EAC initiatives and decisions
- To make recommendations to UT System EAC brought forth by Staff Senate and the UT Tyler staff

6.4.7.2 The duties of the UT System Alternate shall be:

- To fulfill the duties of the UT System Representative, as described above, in their absence.

7.0 Committees

7.1 *Executive Committee*

This committee is composed of The President, Vice President, Historian, Secretary, Treasurer, UT System EAC Representatives, and any additional members approved by the Staff Senate shall constitute the membership of this committee; Past President serves as ex-officio.

This committee shall make formal reports to the President. At least two members of the Executive Committee shall be present at such meeting. The Executive Committee shall provide overall and general guidance and direction for the Staff Senate.

7.2 *Standing Committees*

Prior to the second Staff Senate meeting of the new academic year, each representative is required to sign up for a standing committee. These assignments are for one fiscal year. The Staff Senate Vice President shall determine final standing committee memberships.

The standing committees of Staff Senate shall be the Benefits, Communications, Faculty and Staff Awards, Nominations and Elections, Policies and Procedures, University Appreciation, and UT Tyler Star Award.

7.2.1 Benefits Committee

This committee shall review staff matters regarding benefits and providing recommendations to the Staff Senate as needed. The committee may establish ad hoc subcommittees and/or refer matters for further review by the Staff Senate Officers and/or University Administration as necessary. The committee will review and recommend changes and additions to Handbook of Operating Procedures on behalf of Staff Senate.

The committee will collaboratively work with the University Appreciation Committee to research and promote professional and personal development opportunities for all staff, including conferences, webinars, resources, and discounts.

A Human Resources designee will serve as an advisory ex-officio member of the Benefits Committee. The chair of the committee sits on the University HOP Committee and is expected to attend and participate, as necessary.

This committee will consist of at least three members; the Vice President of Staff Senate serves as Chair, two other members will be selected by the Staff Senate in a regular meeting.

7.2.2 Communications Committee

This committee shall plan and coordinate activities at which University employees can meet their Representatives and learn about Staff Senate activities; serve as the public relations committee of Staff Senate and work with the appropriate University officers to publicize Staff Senate and its activities; and generally, promote Staff Senate as opportunities arise. The Communications Committee maintains the webpage of the Staff Senate and collects and disseminates information about the work of Staff Senate.

This committee will consist of at least three members; the Secretary of Staff Senate serves as Chair, two other members will be selected by the Staff Senate in a regular meeting.

7.2.3 Nominations and Elections Committee

The committee shall handle all Senator nominations and elections procedures as set herein. The

chair of this committee will be responsible for maintaining an election matrix in the Staff Senate archives.

This committee will consist of at least three members; the Historian of Staff Senate serves as chair and two other members will be selected by the Staff Senate in a regular meeting.

7.2.4 Policy and Procedures Committee

The duties of the committee shall be to recommend changes to the Staff Senate Policies and Procedures, as needed. Proposed amendments to the Staff Senate Policies and Procedures should be provided to the Senators in writing at least 10 working days before the next scheduled meeting at which the vote on the amendments is to be taken. Amendments to the Policies and Procedures shall be approved by the Staff Senate representatives. Additionally, the committee will investigate relevant external laws and policies as needed or when applicable to the UT Tyler campus community.

This committee will consist of at least three members who will be selected by the Staff Senate in a regular meeting; the chair will be elected by the committee.

7.2.5 University Appreciation Committee

This committee shall review ways in which to appreciate the staff and faculty for their work through university-wide event(s).

The committee will collaboratively work with the Benefits Committee to research and promote professional and personal development opportunities for all staff, including conferences, webinars, resources, and discounts. When permissible, the committee will coordinate and manage events in collaboration with external vendors and presenters.

This committee will support Presidential events by providing Staff Senate input and ensuring staff representation at key functions.

This committee will consist of at least three members who will be selected by the Staff Senate in a regular meeting; the chair will be elected by the committee.

7.2.6 UT Tyler Star Award Committee

The committee shall select a UT Tyler Star each month from nominations received from faculty, staff, and students in recognition of outstanding service by a full-time, non-faculty employee. The award winner shall be publicly announced and recognized. This committee is responsible for facilitating the nomination and selection process, as well as maintaining recognition efforts for the award winners.

This committee shall email All Faculty and Staff a call for nominations for the three staff awards: President's Passion Award, President's Scholarly Achievement Award, and President's Service Award and any other staff awards as appropriate. This committee will review the nominations received and select the winner of each of the awards. The recommendation of Presidential award winners will then be presented to the President of the University for final approval.

This committee will consist of at least three members; the Treasurer of Staff Senate serves as Chair, two other members will be selected by the Staff Senate in a regular meeting.

7.3 *Ad Hoc Committees*

Ad Hoc committees of Staff Senate shall be appointed by the Executive Committee as needs arise. Generally, the Executive Committee will select a chair of the *Ad Hoc* committee, and the number of members will be determined by the selected chair and Executive Committee. The committee will serve until the committee chair determines the matter has been resolved.

7.3.1 General Duties of All *Ad Hoc* Committees

The *Ad Hoc* committees shall accept the issues assigned to the committee by the Executive Committee, handle the issue in a responsible and timely manner, make progress reports on its activities to Staff Senate, and present a final report/product.

8.0 Meetings

8.1 *Frequency*

Staff Senate shall meet once a month and meetings shall be held during regular working hours.

8.2 *Quorum*

The presence of eleven (11) members Staff Senate shall constitute a quorum.

8.3 *Changes*

To reschedule a monthly meeting a notice of five (5) working days to all Staff Senate members and all Ex-Officio members is required.

Special sessions / meetings may be requested by any members of Staff Senate by submitting a written request to a Staff Senate Executive Committee member. If appropriate, the President will call a special session.

8.4 *Committees*

Standing Committee chairs shall conduct meetings when appropriate and shall communicate regularly. Committee updates shall be given at each monthly Staff Senate meeting.

9.0 Clerical Support

Clerical support shall be provided by the Budget Authority's Office.

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